

Tips for Becoming More Resilient in an Uncertain World

Resilience is the capacity to withstand or to recover from, or to successfully adapt to life's challenges, difficulties, or experiences. As we know from experience, there are many challenges we face in life and more to come. What might some of these challenges be?

There are multiple crises the world faces today, and these are for the most part not readily solvable. Yet, we must face them and do whatever we can to at least mitigate them and adapt to them to the extent possible. Some, but not all of these crises are accelerating climate change, increasing national debt and deficit, increasing costs of health care and financial security, human migrations, aging of society, domestic and foreign terrorism and war, increasing inequality, and increasing socio-political polarization.

Some specific examples include social security running out of sufficient funding by the early 2030s; likely exceeding global warming of 2 degrees Celsius by the mid 2030s; an increasing aging population without sufficient retirement savings, healthcare, and housing; Caucasians will be a minority by the mid-2040s; and before 2040, we will have minority rule with about 70% of the U.S. population (16 states) electing 32 U.S. Senators, while about 30% of the U.S. population (34 states) will elect 68 U.S. Senators. These changes plus dozens more are our near to mid-term future over the next 5-20 years. What could possibly go wrong? What plans are being made to address these crises?

Most individual citizens have little influence over the trajectory of the country, but there are a sample of some things we can do to improve our resiliency.

Physical resilience: Improve or maintain a healthy diet, exercise several times a week, get sufficient sleep each night, and manage stress throughout the day.

Social and Mental resilience: Connect and build community, expand your network, stay in touch and strengthen ties with friends and family, find meaning in daily activities, stay positive and hopeful, take care of yourself, and be more proactive.

Emotional resilience: Strive to be optimistic and hopeful; focus on solutions rather than problems; keep learning and do new things; and learn to adapt where and when possible.

Financial resilience: Reduce debt to manageable levels, increase savings to three to four months' worth of expenses, and increase your financial literacy to make better decisions.

As systems scientist, Joshua Epstein noted, "education in its truest sense is not about a *saleable skill set*. It is about freedom from inherited prejudice and argument by authority." Keep learning, adapt, improve resiliency, and work toward the future you want.